I remarked that the performance of this rite, not kept secret in the fold of the monastery but put completely on public display, was not very honorable for the intendants. The lamas answered, "When squeezed to the wall and when all other rites have been of no avail, the rite has to be performed." Such facts, without stretching the point, are really informative, concerning the type of the intendants.

The overriding importance attached to the appointment of the intendant, who can make a monastery flourish or ruin it, may be explained by the enormous influence exerted in a monastery by them, which matches that of the supreme chief of the institutions, and the stumbling blocks encountered by the intendants, which endanger the correct fulfilling of their office. They serve also to gain a true insight into the frame of mind of the administrative world of the monasteries.

MEANS OF SUBSISTENCE OF THE LAMASERIES

DOMAINS

During the Ming and the Ch'ing dynasties, large domains were granted to the monasteries to provide their means of subsistence. In former times it was easy for the emperors to be lavish in such grants in a sparsely populated country. I never had the opportunity to see the old deeds under which the vast domains of Erh-ku-lung and its flourishing subsidiaries had been granted. Its most important domain is that of the Fan-wu-pu, which it shares with its daughter monastery of Seerkok.[3]

The Chang-chia, T'u-kuan, and Sumpa Hutukhtus were the favorite Living Buddhas of the emperors. It seems an obvious assumption that private domains were also granted to each of them, because Chang-chia was able to found on his properties six branches and eleven villages. T'u-kuan founded seven villages and seven affiliates, while Sumpa founded five branches, and further it is said he disposed of more domains than both Chang-chia and T'u-kuan. The tax and rent revenues collected on their private properties must have been considerable because Chang-chia built nine oil and grain mills and T'u-kuan eighteen, in order to dispose of their grain.

[3] The Fan-wu-pu (the five tribes of barbarians) are situated in the region of Wei-yüan-p'u. They are: (1) Pei-tsui-pu (Narin valley), (2) Tsan-tsa-pu (east and west Tsan-tsa), (3) Hsieh-tsa-pu, (4) Pu-tsa-pu (near the mountains), and (5) Kuang-hua-pu (west of Wei-Yüan-p'u). The people living in these vast territories were the subjects of these two lamaseries, to which they paid taxes and rent, and were liable for corvées. All the villages from Pei-tsui-pu eastward (Ha-la-chih and Hung nai valleys) belonged to Erh-ku-lung; those westward to Seerkok. In 1910 both lamaseries still collected the rent of these fields, enjoyed the privilege of traveling for alms among these former subjects, and vindicated the right of still being invited by them for the performance of public and private religious activities. In that region the monastery of Erh-ku-lung had built twenty-four oil and grain mills. These domains were administered in former times by the important T'u-kuan and Seerkok Nang suo.

4: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1967 AE9 Monguor AE9

but from the landowner who, in case the tenant disappeared or became insolvent, was responsible for the tax. In this way the lamas who were landowners had to collect the official taxes from their tenants, and accompany the endless caravans of their tenants' donkeys carrying grain to the official granaries. Before the journey to the granary started, however, each tenant had to measure the grain in the presence of the lamas and with the measure supplied by the lamas, the capacity of which was greater than the official one; this enabled the lamas to set aside a valuable surplus over the vast amount of official taxes.

The properties of the lamaseries, consisting of extensive territories, contain a large part of waste and untilled land on which no taxes are imposed. The industrious intendants developed these properties by means of irrigation canals, and called in new farmers to till the new fields. The legal amount of taxes, however, has always remained the same as the initial amount, because the intendants, by means of collusion and bribery, easily succeed in gaining over the tax collectors. In this way the revenues of the intendancies are greatly increased, and they still receive surreptitiously a very large revenue. Moreover, they are able to store the surplus, which they can grind or sell when prices are highest.

HERDS

Sheep, cows, and horses constitute, for many intendancies, a source of revenue. Large herds are grazed in Kukunor or Mongolia where the pastures are larger, smaller herds in the country for local use. Mongol princes and Tibetan chiefs of tribes are always ready to help the monasteries. A contract is made with herdsmen by which the first calves, colts, and lambs belong to the owner, the second-born to the herdsman, and so on. Every three years a lama inspector of the intendancy examines the accounts of the herdsmen and settles with them the number of animals to be sold, and the herdsmen show the skins of the animals which died during the three-year period. If they cannot produce the skins of the dead animals it is assumed that they sold the animals and they must pay the owner of the herds.

OIL AND GRAIN MILLS

These mills are a large source of revenue. The monastery proper of Erh-ku-lung is owner of twenty-four oil and grain mills; the T'u-kuan himself has eighteen, Chang-chia nine. The mills are leased by Monguors or Chinese. The rent of oil mills is 300 pounds of oil for a season's use, besides which it must press the oil belonging to the monastery. The grain miller must grind the grain of the intendancy and at the New Year season give a pig weighing 120 pounds. Most of the oil which is not consumed in the kitchen in the preparation of food, or in the lamps in the temples and homes, is sent by raft to Lan-chou, the capital of the province.

[p.44 (B)]